

DURSLEY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES and REPORT of the MEETING of the GREEN SPACES COMMITTEE of the Council held in the **Methodist Church Meeting Room, Castle Street, Dursley** at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, 19th March 2019 for presentation to the Council on the 2nd April 2019.

PRESENT

Chairman: Councillor A Stennett.

Councillors: J Burdge, M Woodward, B Cairns, M Stennett, N Grecian, A Whitwell, J Ball and P Hayes.

In Attendance: Town Clerk, J Kay and Deputy Clerk, L Wellings; 3 Allotment Tenants; Chair of Dursley AFC (Mens) & a Representative of the Committee & Sports Club; 2 representatives of Dursley Ladies Football Club and a Representative of the Dursley Boys Football Club.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were apologies received from Councillors M Nicholson (work).

2. MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

No requests for dispensations were received.

4. REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no representations from the public.

5. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Green Spaces Committee Meeting held on the 15th January 2019, having been circulated among the members, were taken as read, confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

6. CHAIRMAN'S VERBAL REPORT

The Chairman reported on recent acts of vandalism at Highfields Play Area; boundary fences had been damaged and reported to the Police.

It was reported that the Neighbourhood Warden would be carrying out a litter pick on farmland adjacent to Highfields Play Area, picking up a significant amount of litter that had accumulated here along the boundary fence.

7. WELCOME ALLOTMENT TENANTS & REGULAR USERS OF THE WAR MEMORIAL RECREATION GROUND

The Chair officially welcomed the allotment holders and War Memorial Recreation Ground users present and invited them to raise any issues that may be causing concern and to suggest improvements to the level of service the Council currently provides.

8. REGARDING ALLOTMENTS:

An allotment holder reported concerns with the number of unkept plots on the site and how they are being managed, it was suggested that the Council could consider introducing a deposit for plots, which would be returned at the end of a tenancy if the plot was cultivated/left in line with the agreement and forfeited if not.

The Deputy Town Clerk explained the Council's current approach to unkept plots which involved writing to tenants and ultimately, if no improvement, evicting them and reallocating the plot to the waiting list. It was noted that, unfortunately, the process was not quick and some plots were reallocated more than others; it is common for new tenants to find that they don't have the time required to cultivate plots.

It was noted that the allotment tenancy is drawn up to reflect allotment legislation, a deposit process would need to be considered against this to ensure that it was within the law, should Council wish to introduce it in the future.

It was suggested that the Council could approach the Army Cadets to see if they would be interested in helping to prepare vacant plots for reallocation, where they have been left in a poor condition.

The Deputy Town Clerk confirmed that the tap would be turned back on at the end of March; it had been switched off over the winter months to prevent further occurrences of burst pipes.

It was noted that the Deputy Town Clerk had received several requests from allotment tenants, enquiring if the Council would supply a skip for allotment holders to use, as in previous years.

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Council would arrange for a skip to be on site, to coincide with the Easter or May bank holidays; investigate the introduction of a deposit for allotment plots and approach the Army Cadets to see if they would be interested in helping to prepare vacant plots for reallocation.

9. REGARDING THE WAR MEMORIAL RECREATION GROUND

The Chair of Dursley AFC (Mens), a Representative of the Committee & Sports Club; 2 representatives of Dursley Ladies Football Club and a Representative of the new Dursley Boys Football Club were all present.

The football clubs reported concerns with the grass cutting and whether the contract was being fulfilled, they had found it to be poor this season and noted that it had not yet been cut this year, which is an issue for forthcoming training/matches.

The Town Clerk encouraged the clubs to report problems to the Council office when they occur so that steps can be taken to resolve issues without delay and impact to activities.

The football clubs requested that a new tap is installed in one of the home-changing rooms, at the moment there is no suitable tap to fill sports drinking bottles.

The football clubs reported on ongoing work to develop a New Sports Club at the old cricket club building; there had been some delays but work was now proceeding with a planning application expected to be submitted. The Council would be kept up to date and would be welcome to come along and see progress in the near future; the clubs

hope to encourage others to use the facility and would like to see cricket return to the ground in the future.

The football clubs would be arranging an end of season meeting to discuss storage and club arrangements amongst themselves, the Council was invited to send a representative, suitable date options for April would be looked at.

IT WAS RESOLVED that the Council would contact the grass cutting contractor to arrange for the grass to be cut and would continue to monitor the contract; the Council would investigate options for fitting a suitable tap into the Pavilion for filling bottles and the Committee Chairman would attend the end of season football clubs meeting.

10. CHARGES FOR EXERCISE CLASSES ON THE WAR MEMORIAL RECREATION GROUND

The Council's policy for charging for exercise classes on the War Memorial Recreation Ground was considered following a request from a potential hirer.

The Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk reported that the charge for Commercial Aerobics/Fitness (per class) for use of the ground, £19.00 plus VAT from April 2019, was putting off potential hirers; the Council had been approached by various people offering different classes in the past, but all had found the charge too high to proceed with a booking.

IT WAS RESOLVED to change the charge to £1 per head (+VAT), to be capped at £19 (+VAT). Charges for use of the pavilion are separate and would remain unchanged.

11. KINGSHILL PLAY PARK SWING

The Deputy Town Clerk reported that Playdale had installed the new replacement swing at Kingshill Play Park; the wooden barriers around the swing were retained but would be removed in the future should they become unsafe; the swing was currently fenced off to allow the surface to settle and would be open in a couple of weeks, the Council's independent play inspection is expected in the summer.

It was noted that the old basket swing seat had been retained and installed at Highfields Play Area, to replace the Playdale bucket swing seat that had been previously damaged and removed from use.

12. DAMAGED ZIP WIRE AT HIGHFIELDS PLAY AREA

The Town Clerk reported that the community had responded to the Council's news story appealing for information about the recently damaged zipwire; a name had been supplied and passed to the Police who were investigating.

It was noted that the zipwire seat would remain off and out of use until the Police had concluded their investigation. It was suggested that a further news story could be published including a thanks to the community for engaging with the Council on the matter.

13. REGARDING 2019/20 PROJECTS/MAINTENANCE WORKS

Councillor Ball declared a non-pecuniary interest in 13 a), as an acquaintance of one of the contractors.

- a) Members considered a report and three quotations received for repairs to the pavilion guttering.

IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the quotation from D Hill to repair the guttering at a cost of £490+VAT. Councillor Ball abstained from the vote.

- b) Members considered a report and four quotations received for a replacement mower.

IT WAS RESOLVED to accept the Town Clerk’s recommendation to replace the existing mower with the Stiga Park 740 PWX with 110cm Pro quick flip deck from Nailsworth Garden Machinery for a total cost of £4,399 (incl VAT) and fund the purchase from the Earmarked Reserve – Machinery/Vehicle fund, topping it back up to the £10,000 limit during the 2020/21 budget setting process, to allow for future purchases.

It was noted that in the future the Council would need to consider replacing the ground maintenance vehicle.

- c) Members considered a report and four quotations received for the installation of a Petanque Court on the War Memorial Recreation Ground.

IT WAS RESOLVED to agree in principle to install a Petanque Court in Area A, without fencing, subject to agreement from the football clubs who use the main pitch; to seek a maximum 50% funding from Sport England Community Asset Fund towards the costs of the provision of a terrain and to work with Courtstall Services Ltd as the preferred supplier to install the facility, based on their quotation of £6,980. The Committee Chairman would raise the issue with the football clubs at the end of season meeting (see minute item 9).

14. REGARDING TREE WORKS

Members received an update on the tree works programme based on the Council’s Arboriculture Report carried out in June 2018.

A quotation and associated advice from the Council’s Tree Management contractor had priced the tree works required for 2019/20 at £1076 (+VAT) in total. The quotation had also provided for tree works to improve the tennis court surface, which was being adversely impacted by overhanging branches.

IT WAS RESOLVED that the tree works for 2019/20, as quoted for, would be programmed to take place with Tree Management over the year.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 20:25

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Chairman

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Date